

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an FET as an N-channel MOS transistor provided upstream of the load with respect to a flow of power current, the FET controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a first connection changer interposed on a connection line between a gate of the FET and a gate drive voltage supply source, the first connection changer changing a connection state between a first connection state in which the gate is connected to the gate drive voltage supply and a second connection state in which the gate is connected to a ground,

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

2. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 1, further comprising:  
a first resistor interposed between the gate and a source of the FET; and  
a second resistor interposed between the gate and the first connection changer or between the first connection changer and the ground.

3. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 2, further comprising:  
a second connection changer interposed on a connection line between the gate and the source of the FET, the second connection changer for connecting and disconnecting the connection line;

wherein the first resistor is interposed on the connection line.

4. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an FET as an N-channel MOS transistor provided upstream of

the load with respect to a flow of power current, the FET controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a first connection changer interposed between a portion on a first connection line and a ground, the first connection changer connecting and disconnecting between the portion and the ground;

wherein the first connection line connects a gate of the FET and a gate drive voltage supply source, and

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

5. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 4, further comprising:

a first resistor interposed on a second connection line between the gate and a source of the FET; and

a second resistor interposed on a route from the gate to the ground through the first connection line and the connection changer.

6. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 5, further comprising:

a second connection changer interposed on the second connection line between the gate and the source of the FET, the second connection changer connecting and disconnecting the second connection line;

wherein the first resistor is interposed in the second connection line.

7. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an FET as a P-channel MOS transistor, the FET for controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a connection changer interposed on a connection line between a gate of the FET and a ground, the connection changer changing a connection state between a first connection state in which the gate is connected to the ground and a second connection state in which the gate is connected to a source of the FET;

a first resistor interposed between the gate of the FET and the connection changer or between the connection changer and the source of the FET; and

a second resistor interposed between the gate and the drain of the FET,

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

8. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an FET as a P-channel MOS transistor, the FET controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a connection changer interposed between a first portion, on a first connection line connected to ~~between a gate and a~~ source of the FET, and a ground, the connection changer connecting and disconnecting a second portion on a second connection line connected to a gate of the FET between the first portion and the ground;

a first resistor interposed on ~~a route of from the gate of the FET to the source thereof through the~~ the second connection line; and

a second resistor interposed between the gate and a drain of the FET,

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

9. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an IGBT provided upstream of the load with respect to a flow of power current, the IGBT controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a connection changer interposed on a connection line between a gate of the IGBT and a gate drive voltage supply source, the connection changer changing a connection state between a first connection state in which the gate is connected to the gate drive voltage supply and a second connection state in which the gate is connected to a ground,

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

10. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 9, further comprising:

a first resistor interposed between the gate and an emitter of the IGBT; and  
a second resistor interposed between the gate of the IGBT and the connection changer  
or between the connection changer and the ground.

11. (Currently Amended) A protection circuit, to be provided for a circuit arrangement having an inductive load and an IGBT provided upstream of the load with respect to a flow of power current, the IGBT controlling an energization state of the load, the protection circuit comprising:

a connection changer interposed between a portion on a connection line and a ground, the connection changer connecting and disconnecting between the portion and the ground;

wherein the connection line connects a gate of the IGBT and a gate drive voltage supply source, and

wherein the protection circuit does not include a zener diode.

12. (Original) The protection circuit according to claim 11, further comprising:

a first resistor interposed between the gate and an emitter of the IGBT; and

a second resistor interposed on a route from the gate of the IGBT to the ground through the connection line and the connection changer.